



SeekersGuidance  
THE GLOBAL ISLAMIC SEMINARY

# A COMPLETE GUIDE TO **FASTING AND RAMADAN**





اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ



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# THE FIQH OF FASTING IN THE **HANAFI MADHHAB**

by **Ustadha Umm Ihsan**

Fasting the month of Ramadan is one of the five pillars of Islam. The Companion Abdullah ibn Umar ibn al-Khattab (Allah be pleased with him) said, “I heard the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and give him peace) say: ‘The religion of Islam is based upon five (pillars): testifying that there is no deity except God and Muhammad is the Messenger of God; establishing the prayer; giving zakat; making pilgrimage; and fasting (the month) of Ramadan.’” [Bukhari; Muslim]

In truth, fasting the month of Ramadan is one of the greatest acts of worship a believer can perform. It is an act that cleanses one’s mind, body, and soul from the spiritual and physical impurities of this world. It is an act that brings the hearts of Muslims together on a world-wide level as they endeavor to practice the virtue of self-discipline in unison. And it is an act that satiates the hungry soul for its eagerness to please the Lord of the Worlds.

The act of fasting was also practiced by previous religious communities. Likewise, it has been ordained for the followers of the Prophet Muhammad (Allah bless him and give him peace). Allah All-Mighty says in the Quran, “O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed onto you as it was prescribed onto those before you, that perhaps ye may (learn) self-restraint.” [Surat Al-Baqara, v. 183]

# WHAT IS **FASTING**?

Linguistically, the word fasting in the Arabic language means unconditional 'restraint' (imsak) from any action or speech during any time.

According to the Sacred Law, fasting is the act of:

- a. Refraining from engaging in sexual activity, and
- b. Refraining from entering anything into the body cavity,
- c. Whether deliberately or accidentally,
- d. From true dawn to the time the sun sets
- e. Accompanied with the intention of fasting
- f. From individuals who are permitted to fast.

'Refraining from engaging in sexual activity' includes actual sexual intercourse and ejaculation caused by foreplay.

'Refraining from entering anything into the body cavity' refers to the acts of entering food, drink, or medicine into the body cavity, regardless of whether



this is a typical item one would enter into the body cavity or not. Entering any of these substances inside the body cavity means that the substance enters into the throat, the intestines, the stomach, or the brain by way of the nose, the throat, the private parts, or open wounds.

‘Whether deliberately or accidentally’ excludes forgetful acts of eating, drinking, or sexual activity.

‘From the time the sun begins to rise to the time the sun sets’ refers to the true entering of the Fajr time to the entering of the Maghrib time.

‘Accompanied with the intention of fasting’ means that one must intend to fast in order to distinguish if one is really performing an act of worship or not when one refrains from eating, drinking, or having sexual intercourse. For example, if one were to merely stay away from food, drink, or sexual activity without an intention to fast, then this fast is not valid and does not count.

‘From individuals who are permitted to fast’ means that one must be free from a situation that would prevent the validity of one’s fast, such as menstruation or lochia (post-natal bleeding).

[Shurunbulali, Maraqqi al-Falah; Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya; Shurunbulali Imdad al-Fattah]





# WHEN DOES FASTING **BECOME OBLIGATORY?**

Fasting the month of Ramadan is obligatory upon every Muslim, male and female, who is sane and pubescent. This ruling also applies to making up any unperformed Ramadan fasts whether due to an excuse or one's own remissness. Therefore, a person is obliged to makeup missed Ramadan fasts. [Shurunbulali, Maraqqi al-Falah]

A male child becomes pubescent when he experiences a wet dream or ejaculation. A female child becomes pubescent when she experiences a wet dream or her first menstruation. If by the age of 15 lunar years neither male nor female has undergone these experiences, then they are considered legally pubescent and are obliged to fast.

Fasting the current month of Ramadan is obligatory upon the aforementioned individuals if they are physically able to fast, free from menstruation and lochia (post-natal bleeding), and resident. [ibid]



# WHO IS EXCUSED FROM FASTING THE MONTH OF RAMADAN?

Fasting the month of Ramadan is not obligatory upon a menstruating woman or a woman in the state of lochia (post-natal bleeding) because fasting is not permitted while they are in this state. [Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah]

Sick people and women who are pregnant or breastfeeding are obliged to fast. However, illness can excuse a person from fasting if one reasonably fears that the act of fasting would increase the sickness or slow the recovery process. The same ruling applies to a woman who is pregnant or breastfeeding and reasonably fears that fasting will harm her or her baby. Reasonable fear is known by: 1) manifest signs, 2) a relevant past experience, or 3) the notification of an upright, Muslim doctor/expert. [Shurunbulali, Maraqqi al-Falah; Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah]

A traveler is also excused from fasting if he initiates his journey before the time of Fajr enters. However, it is better that he fasts providing that this does not cause undue hardship. If a person begins fasting a day of Ramadan and then travels, he is obliged to complete his fast. [ibid]

All of the aforementioned individuals are obliged to make up their missed fasts once Ramadan has ended in a time that they are able. There is no expiation for a person who delays making up their missed fasts, though it is superior to make them up immediately if they are able. [ibid]

# WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF FASTS?

There are essentially 9 types of fasts:

1. Specified\* Obligatory (fard) fasts: the current month of Ramadan
2. Non-Specified Obligatory (fard) fasts: make up fasts from a past Ramadan
3. Specified Necessary (wajib) fasts: specified vowed fasts
4. Non-Specified Necessary (wajib) fasts:
  - *non-specified vowed fasts*
  - *expiation fasts*
  - *make up fasts for any vowed, sunna, nafl, or expiation fast that one vitiated*
5. Emphasized Sunna fast:
  - *the 9th of Dhul al-Hijjah (the day of Arafat)*
  - *the 10th of Muharram (the day of 'Ashura) along with either the ninth or the eleventh day*
6. Recommended fasts:
  - *13th, 14th, 15th days of each lunar month (full moon days)*
  - *every Monday and Thursday of each month*
  - *6 days of the month of Shawwal; it is best to perform them consecutively*
  - *any other fast established by a request or promise of reward from the sunna, like the fast of Dawud (fasting every other day), which is said to be the most beloved fast to Allah*
7. Voluntary (nafl) fasts: any fast other than the aforementioned as long as it is not disliked

## 8. Slightly Disliked (makruh tanzihi) fasts:

- *only fasting 10th of Muharram without the ninth or eleventh day*
- *singling out Friday if one specifically thinks that there is reward in it, otherwise there is no dislikedness*
- *singling out Saturday, though there is no dislikedness if it coincides with another type of fast*
- *continuously fasting without breaking one's fast in the evening (wisal)*

## 9. Prohibitively disliked (makruh tahrimi), sinful fasts:

- *the day of Eid al-Fitr*
- *the day of Eid al-Adha and the three days that follow (al-Ayyam al-Tashriq)*

[Shurunbulali, Maraqi al-Falah; Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya; Shurunbulali Imdad al-Fattah; Tahtawi, Hashiyya al-Tahtawi]

\*Specified fast means that there is a specific time designated for performing this fast. [Radd al-Muhtar] As such, one is obliged to fast this day, and one cannot intend to fast a different type of fast.

Non-Specified fast means that there is not a specific time designated for performing this fast. Therefore, it is possible to choose when to fast it. The distinction between specified and non-specified also returns to rulings related to the intention which is forthcoming.



# WHAT ARE THE STIPULATIONS FOR A VALID FAST?

The stipulations for a valid fast are:

- 1) the intention
- 2) to be free from menstruation and lochia, and
- 3) to be free from anything else that would break the fast.  
[Shurunbulali, Nur al-Iydhah]

It is not a condition for the validity of the fast that a person be free from the state of major ritual impurity (janaba). The mother of the believers, Aisha (Allah be pleased with her) said, “Fajr would enter during the month of Ramadan and the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and give him peace) would be in a state of major ritual purity from other than a sexual dream (i.e. because of sexual relations). He would perform the purificatory bath and fast (that day).” [Muslim]

Likewise, if one intended to fast during the night and woke up within Fajr time in a state of major ritual impurity, then one must perform the purificatory bath (ghusl) for the sake of the validity of one’s prayers, fast this day, and the fast is considered valid. [Shurunbulali, Maraqqi al-Falah; Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah]

# WHAT IS THE INTENTION?

The intention is needed for each day one fasts, even in the month of Ramadan. [Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah; Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya]

The intention is the determination one feels in the heart to do something. [Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya] A way to envision this point is if a person was to ask one what they are doing, one would affirm that they are fasting. Practically-speaking, it is nearly impossible to not have the intention in the Hanafi madhhab. One does not have to verbally state the intention, though it is better. [ibid]



# WHEN DOES ONE MAKE THE INTENTION?

The time of the intention depends on the type of fast.

**Category A:** For the specified obligatory, specified necessary, emphasized sunna, recommended, and nafl fasts, the following rulings apply to the intention:

1. One must make the intention in the appropriate time in order for the fast to count.
2. The time of the intention is from Maghrib of the previous night to before the Islamic midday (see definition below) of the following day. This is providing that one did nothing that would invalidate the fast from the start of Fajr time.
3. Scholars confirm that it is superior for one to make the intention the night before one fasts (i.e. any time from Maghrib to the entering of Fajr) due to the difference of opinion from other schools on this point. It is sufficient to intend to fast without specifying if the fast is obligatory, necessary, sunna, recommended, or nafl.

[Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah; Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya; al-Fatawa al-Hindiyya]

**Category B:** For non-specified obligatory and non-specified necessary fasts, the following rulings apply to the intention:

1. One must make the intention in the appropriate time in order for the fast to count.
2. The time for the intention is from Maghrib of the previous night to the entering of Fajr on the day one desires to fast.
3. One must also specify the type of fast when intending.

4. If one made the intention after the entering of Fajr to before the Islamic midday (see definition below), then this fast counts as a voluntary (nafl) fast instead.

[Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah; Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya]



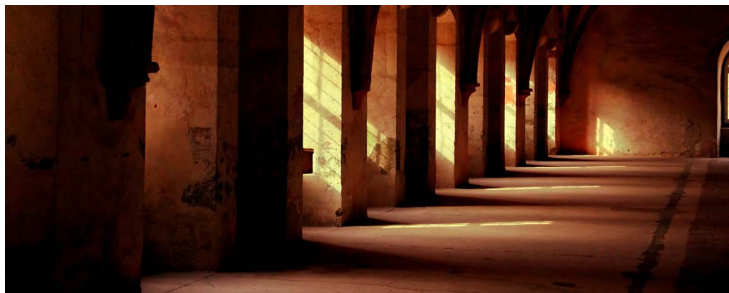


## WHEN IS THE ISLAMIC MIDDAY?

The Islamic midday (al-Dahwa al-Kubra) is the half-way point between the entering of Fajr time to the entering of Maghrib time. It does not mean noon, nor does it mean the zawal. [Mulla Khusru, Durar al-Hikam Sharh Ghurar al-Ahkam; ibn Abidin, Radd al-Muhtar]

For example, if Fajr entered at 5 am and Maghrib entered at 5 pm, then the Islamic midday would be the half-way point between this 12 hour time span, which is 11 am. Thus, in this example, a person would have from the entering of Maghrib of the previous night to before 11 am of the next day to make the intention if he is performing a fast from category A.

The intention must be made 'before' the Islamic midday because one needs to fast with the intention for the majority of the day. According to the Sacred Law, this would be akin to fasting the entire day. [Mulla Khusru, Durar al-Hikam Sharh Ghurar al-Ahkam; ibn Abidin, Radd al-Muhtar]

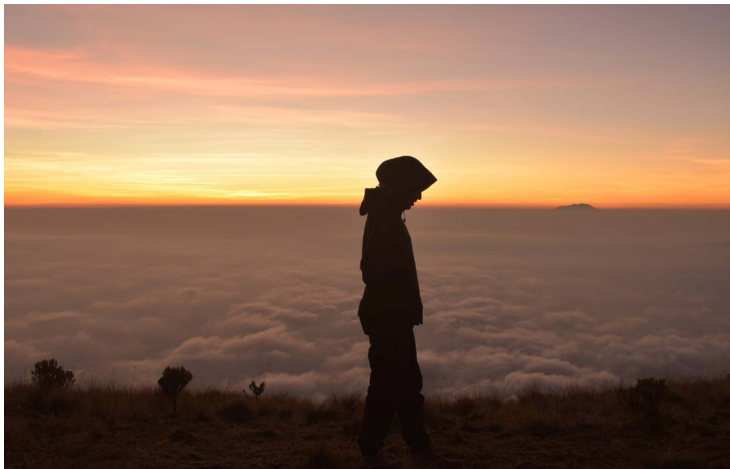


# WHAT HAPPENS IF ONE **DECIDES NOT TO FAST?**

It is a condition that the intention to fast remains with one.

If during the night one decides to not fast the next day after previously intending to fast it, then one is not considered to be fasting for that day. If one renewed the intention, however, then one is considered to be fasting.

[Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah; Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya]



# WHAT ARE SOME RECOMMENDED **ACTS WHILE FASTING?**

To eat the pre-dawn meal (suhur) before Fajr time enters  
To delay the pre-dawn meal closer to the time before Fajr enters  
To hasten to break one's fast at the entering of Maghrib  
[Shurunbulali, Nur al-lydah]



# WHAT ARE SOME DUAS TO READ **WHEN BREAKING THE FAST?**

Allahumma laka sumtu wa bika aamantu wa ‘alayka tawakkaltu wa ‘ala rizqika aftartu wa sawm al-ghad min shahr Ramadan nawaytu faghfir li ma qaddamtu wa ma akh-khartu

“Oh Allah, for You I fasted, and in You I believe, and on You I place my reliance, and on Your provision I break my fast. And I intend the fasting of tomorrow for the month of Ramadan. Forgive me for what I did before and what I do after.”

Allahumma laka sumtu wa ‘ala rizqika aftartu

“Oh Allah for You I fasted and upon Your provision I break my fast.”

Allahumma laka sumna wa ‘ala rizqika aftarna fataqabbal minna innaka Anta al-Sami’ al-‘Alim

“Oh Allah for You we fasted, and upon Your provision we break our fasts. Accept this from us. Verily, You are All-Hearing, All-Knowing.”

[Nawawi, al-Adhkar; Tahtawi, Hashiyya al-Tahtawi]



# WHAT DOES A WOMAN DO IF HER PERIOD STARTS IN RAMADAN?

If her menstruation starts in Ramadan during the night (i.e. any time from the entering of Maghrib to before the entering of Fajr), then she refrains from fasting the following day and for the duration that she is menstruating. [Hedaya Hartford, Birgivi's Manual Interpreted]

If her menstruation starts in Ramadan during the day (i.e. any time from the entering of Fajr to the entering of Maghrib), then her fast is vitiated and it does not count. She must make up this day after Ramadan has ended in a time when she is able. She must refrain from fasting for the duration that she is menstruating. [Shurunbulali, Maraql al-Falah; Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah; Tahtawi, Hashiyya al-Tahtawi]

A menstruating woman can eat and drink during the day in Ramadan. If she believes that it is unlawful for her to eat or drink, then it is necessary for her to do so as refraining from food or drink with the intention of fasting is unlawful for her. [Tahtawi, Hashiyya al-Tahtawi; Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah]

A menstruating woman should record the number of days she missed while fasting and make them up after Ramadan ends in a time when she is able.

The same rulings apply to a woman in a state of lochia (post-natal bleeding).

# WHAT DOES A WOMAN DO **IF HER PERIOD ENDS IN RAMADAN?**

If her menstruation stops in Ramadan during the night (i.e. any time from the entering of Maghrib to before the entering of Fajr), then she performs a purificatory bath (ghusl), begins her obligatory worship, and she is obliged to fast the following day and the remainder of Ramadan. [Hedaya Hartford, Birgivi's Manual Interpreted]

Note: There are details to this point if her menstruation ends before the menstrual maximum of 10 complete days and the ghusl time finishes within the Fajr time. Please refer to Hedaya Hartford's 'Birgivi's Manual Interpreted.'

If her menstruation stops in Ramadan during the day (i.e. any time after the entering of Fajr up to the entering of Maghrib), then she performs a purificatory bath (ghusl), begins her obligatory worship and she acts like a fasting person until the Maghrib time enters due to the sacredness of the month of Ramadan. [Hedaya Hartford, Birgivi's Manual Interpreted] It is necessary for her to abstain from eating and drinking for the remainder of the day. [Shurunbulali, Maraqi al-Falah; Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah] She is sinful if she does not do so. However, this day of acting like a fasting person does not count as a fast. She must make up this day after Ramadan has ended in a time when she is able. [ibid] She is obliged to fast the following day and the remainder of Ramadan.



A menstruating woman should record the number of days she missed while fasting and make them up after Ramadan ends in a time when she is able.

The same rulings apply to a woman in a state of lochia (post-natal bleeding).



# ARE THERE ACTIONS **THAT CAN VITIATE THE FAST?**

Yes, there are actions that can vitiate the fast. These actions fall under two categories:

- 1) that which vitiates the fast and requires a makeup along with expiation and
- 2) that which vitiates the fast and requires makeup only. [ibn Abidin, Radd al-Muhtar]

For the first category, the principle returns to deliberately performing an act that vitiates the fast by one's own free will and without a valid reason. Deliberately means that one remembers that one is fasting and purposely performs an action that breaks the fast. [ibid] These actions are outlined below in the section 'category 1.'

For the second category, the principle returns to accidentally performing an act that vitiates the fast. It also includes acts performed by force of a third party. Accidentally means that one remembers that one is fasting but broke the fast by one's own doing without the intention to purposely break the fast. [Tahtawi, Hashiyya al-Tahtawi; Related in Radd al-Muhtar] These actions are outlined below in the section 'category 2.'

If any of the actions from category 1 are performed forgetfully, then they do not vitiate the fast. Forgetfully means that one does not have the presence of mind that one is fasting when performing the action. [Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah] The Prophet (Allah bless him and give



him peace) said, “Whoever forgets that he is fasting and eats or drinks, then he still completes his fast. It is only Allah who fed him and gave him drink.” [Bukhari] In another narration, the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) said, “If a fasting person eats forgetfully, it is only provision Allah put forth to him and there is no makeup upon him.” [Bukhari]



# CATEGORY 1:

## ACTS THAT VITIATE THE FAST & REQUIRE MAKEUP & EXPIATION

Acts that invalidate the fast and require a makeup along with expiation only relate to the current Ramadan fasts. Otherwise, if one performs any of the following actions while performing a fast outside of the current month of Ramadan, such as a make-up fast, then the fast is vitiated and only a makeup is required. One does not owe the expiation.

If done deliberately, by one's own free will, and without a valid reason while fasting a current Ramadan fast, the following acts invalidate the fast and require a makeup along with expiation:

1. Eating or drinking something that humans would normally consume and this consummation nourishes, medicates, or pleases the body in some way
2. Actual sexual intercourse, in the front or rear private part\*, regardless if one ejaculated or not
3. Swallowing the saliva of one's spouse

[Shurunbulali, Maraqqi al-Falah; Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya]

\*It is impermissible and a grave crime to engage in sexual intercourse from the rear private part. The Sacred Law unconditionally prohibits this type of sexual activity whether during or not during the month of Ramadan.



# WHAT IS THE EXPIATION?

The expiation is to fast sixty consecutive days in the year without any interruption. One must choose a time where one can fast these sixty days without the days of Eid or the three days after Eid al-Adha (al-Ayyam al-Tashriq) interrupting the fasts because of the prohibition of fasting on these days. [Shurunbulali, Maraqi al-Falah] If one does not fast them consecutively, then one must restart the 60 day period each time the continuity of the fasts is broken. [Tahtawi, Hashiyya al-Tahtawi]

The only exceptions to this rule are if one is menstruating or in a state of lochia (post-natal bleeding). A menstruating woman must continue to fast after she becomes pure, and she cannot delay the completion of the expiation. If she does delay fasting after becoming pure, then she must restart the 60 days of fasting. [Tahtawi, Hashiyya al-Tahtawi] The same ruling applies to a woman in the state of lochia.

If one is genuinely unable to perform the sixty consecutive fasts based on reasonable surety, then one must either:

- a. feed the same sixty, poor people to their fill for two meals, or
- b. feed one poor person to his fill for two meals a day for sixty days, or
- c. give sixty poor people half a sa'\* of wheat (or similar food grains) or its monetary value, or
- d. give sixty poor people a sa'\* of dates (or similar food grains) or its monetary value, or
- e. give one poor person either c or d for sixty days.



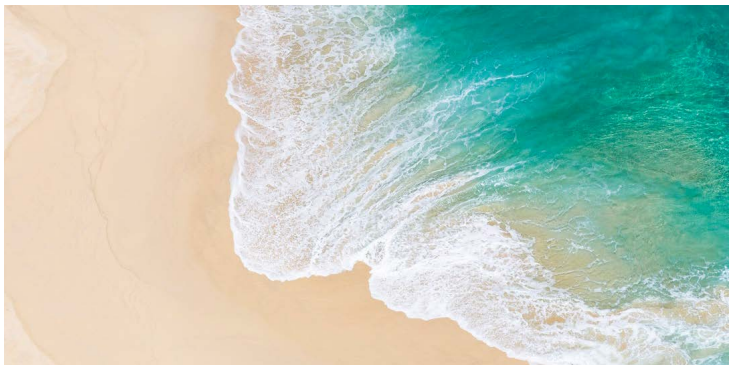
It is important to note that one does not have a choice between fasting sixty days and feeding sixty poor people. Rather, one is obliged to fast sixty days, unless one is genuinely unable to perform all of these fasts based on reasonable surety.

Reasonable surety is known by: 1) manifest signs, 2) a relevant past experience, or 3) the notification of an upright, Muslim doctor/expert.

One expiation suffices for all previous violations performed, even if they occurred in separate Ramadans. However, if one performed a future violation after the performance of the expiation, then a new expiation is owed.

[Shurunbulali, Maraqi al-Falah; Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya; Shurunbulali Imdad al-Fattah]

\*Half a sa' is approximately 2 kilos (4.5 pounds). A full sa' is approximately 4 kilos (9 pounds).



## CATEGORY 2:

# ACTS THAT VITIATE THE FAST & REQUIRE MAKE UP BUT DO NOT REQUIRE EXPIATION

This category includes any act that vitiates the fast if done accidentally (see aforementioned definition) or by force of another.

It also includes any makeup fast one vitiated while trying to make it up.

### The Mouth & Throat:

eating or drinking accidentally

eating or drinking because one thought Maghrib entered but Maghrib did not enter

eating or drinking because one doubted that Fajr entered but Fajr really did enter

eating or drinking forgetfully and thereafter thinking that the fast is broken, to deliberately eat and drink again

swallowing what is between the teeth, on the condition that it is the size of a chickpea or bigger

swallowing a pebble or other items that people wouldn't typically eat

swallowing water by accident when gargling for wudu or ghusl (with the exception of water that remains in the mouth—see next category)

swallowing blood that exits from the gums and preponderates over the saliva

swallowing toothpaste or mouthwash

deliberately swallowing vomit that reaches a mouthful

deliberately vomiting a mouthful, regardless if one swallows it or not

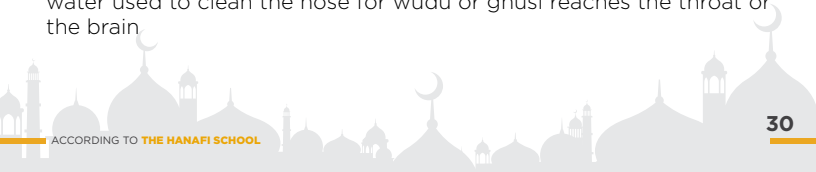
vomiting and thereafter thinking that the fast is broken, to deliberately vomit again  
smoke that enters the throat by one's doing, on the condition one's body doesn't benefit from it  
kissing that causes one to ejaculate, on the condition one did not swallow the other's saliva

### The Private Parts:

engaging in sexual intercourse because one still thinks Fajr has not entered but it really has  
engaging in sexual intercourse forgetfully and thereafter thinking that the fast is broken, to deliberately have sexual intercourse again  
entering a suppository into the anus  
entering something dry into the anus and it completely disappears inside the body  
entering something wet or oiled into the anus, even if it does not completely disappear inside of the body  
entering a wet tissue or a wet piece of cotton into the vagina, even if it does not completely disappear inside of the body  
entering a dry tissue or a dry piece of cotton into the vagina and it is completely inserted inside of the body without any part remaining outside  
pouring water or oil into the anus and it reaches the distance of the mihqana\*  
pouring water or oil into the vagina and it reaches the distance of the mihqana

### The Nose:

water used to clean the nose for wudu or ghusl reaches the throat or the brain



inhaling medicine into the nostrils

inhaling smoke by one's doing, on the condition one's body doesn't benefit from it

### **The Body, in General:**

touching that causes one to ejaculate (this includes masturbation)

applying medicine to an open abdominal or head wound and it reaches the stomach or the brain

[Shurunbulali, Maraqi al-Falah; Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya; Shurunbulali Imdad al-Fattah]

\*The mihqana, or huqna in other relations, is a device used to insert medicine into the body by way of the anus (medical term: enema). In our day, a mihqana is similar to a rectal syringe or a clyster-pipe. The distance that breaks the fast is determined by when the top of mihqana reaches the place where medicine is released from it to the intestines. [Radd al-Muhtar]



# WHAT ARE THE ACTS THAT **DO NOT BREAK THE FAST?**

## The Mouth & Throat:

Eating or drinking something forgetfully (see aforementioned definition).

Eating what is between the teeth if it is less than the size of a chickpea tasting the leftover traces of medicine in the mouth or throat chewing on a sesame seed without swallowing it, if its taste doesn't reach the throat.

Dust or smoke (including smoke from 'ud or incense) entering one's throat without one's doing.

A mosquito, fly, or any other object entering one's throat without one's doing

Swallowing the wetness that remains after washing one's mouth for wudu or ghusl.

swallowing one or two drops of sweat or tears that enter the mouth and mixes with one's saliva, on the condition that one cannot taste its saltiness

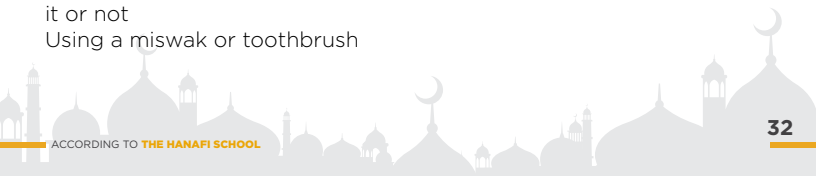
Swallowing one's own saliva

Swallowing one's own phlegm after clearing the throat

Swallowing vomit that emerges in the mouth without one's doing, even if it is a mouthful

Deliberately vomiting less than a mouthful, regardless if one swallows it or not

Using a miswak or toothbrush





wetting one's lips with one's saliva while speaking and swallowing it  
swallowing blood that exits from the gums and does not preponderate over the saliva on the condition one cannot taste it pulling back saliva into one's mouth that flows to the chin like a string on the condition that it stays connected and does not break off  
backbiting

### The Private Parts:

Performing sexual intercourse forgetfully  
the state of major ritual impurity (janaba) suddenly befalls one, such as from a wet dream  
ejaculation caused by looking or thinking  
entering a dry finger into the anus  
pouring water or oil into the male urethra  
entering tissue or a piece of cotton into the male urethra, even if it completely disappears inside the body  
entering a dry finger into the vagina  
entering a dry tissue or a dry piece of cotton into the vagina upon the condition that part of it remains outside of the body  
performing istinja with water, providing that the wetness doesn't reach the distance of the mihqana (see aforementioned definition)

### The Nose:

Mucus descending from the nose  
sniffing up mucus that is in the nose and it descends to one's throat  
inhaling smoke, perfume, or incense without one's doing  
smelling an odor



### The Eyes:

Applying kuhl in the eyes, even if one finds its taste in the throat or its color in the saliva or phlegm  
dripping eye drops or contact solution into the eyes  
wearing contact lenses

### The Ears:

Water entering the ears from a bath  
scratching the inside of one's ear with a q-tip, even if dirt exits and one reinserts it into the ear

### The Body, in General:

Rubbing oil or cream on the body or hair  
applying deodorant  
performing a bath and finding its coolness penetrating into one's body  
withdrawing blood, such as in a blood test  
blood cupping

### The Mind:

Intending to break one's fast but not actually doing it  
[Shurunbulali, Maraqqi al-Falah; Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya;  
Shurunbulali Imdad al-Fattah]



# WHAT ARE THE ACTS THAT ARE **DISLIKED WHILE FASTING?**

Tasting or chewing something without an excuse, provided that its flavor is not swallowed  
chewing flavorless gum  
kissing with desire in which one fears falling into sexual intercourse or ejaculation, on the condition one did not swallow the other's saliva  
gathering saliva in the mouth and then swallowing it  
to gargle excessively when making wudu or ghusl for fear of breaking the fast  
to sniff water excessively when cleaning the nose in wudu or ghusl for fear of breaking the fast  
doing things that would weaken one while fasting, like cupping or withdrawing blood  
brushing the teeth with toothpaste or using mouthwash, on the condition one does not swallow it  
[Shurunbulali, Maraqqi al-Falah; Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya; Shurunbulali Imdad al-Fattah]



# CAN I BE AFFECTIONATE WITH MY SPOUSE WHILE **FASTING?**

There are different rulings related to this question due to the various ways one can be affectionate.

## **Physical Contact that Does Not Vitate the Fast:**

Non-passionate kissing in which one is free from swallowing the saliva of one's spouse and free from the fear of falling into sexual intercourse or ejaculation

Non-passionate touching in which one is free from the fear of falling into sexual intercourse or ejaculation, such as hugging or holding hands

Looking at one's spouse, even if one ejaculates

## **Physical Contact that Does Not Vitate the Fast But Is Prohibitively Disliked and Sinful:**

Kissing with desire in which one fears falling into sexual intercourse or ejaculation

Touching with desire in which one fears falling into sexual intercourse or ejaculation

Anything sexual that one fears will lead to sexual intercourse or ejaculation



## Physical Contact that Vitiates the Fast And Requires Makeup Only:

Ejaculation from masturbation\*

Kissing and touching (i.e. no actual penetration took place) that causes ejaculation\*

## Physical Contact that Vitiates the Fast and Requires Makeup and Expiation\*\*:

Deliberate passionate kissing that causes one to swallow the saliva of one's spouse\*

Deliberate sexual intercourse in one of the private parts with ejaculation\*

Deliberate sexual intercourse in one of the private parts without ejaculation\*

\*The person who involved himself in the above-mentioned situations should refrain from eating, drinking, and sexual activity for the remainder of that day, as well as repenting for the severity of the sin.

\*\*Outside the month of Ramadan, if one breaks a fast deliberately through these acts, then the expiation is not required.

[Shurunbulali, Maraqqi al-Falah; Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya]



# WHAT IS THE I'TIKAF (SPIRITUAL RETREAT)?

The mother of the believers, Aisha (Allah be pleased with her) said, "The Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) would always perform I'tikaf in the last ten days of Ramadan until Allah Most High took his soul (Allah bless him and give him peace)." [Bukhari]

The scholar al-Zahidi said, "It is strange how the people have left performing the I'tikaf. The Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and give him peace) performed some actions and left them, but he never left the I'tikaf—from the time he entered Medina to the moment he died (Allah bless him and give him peace)."

The I'tikaf is entering the masjid with the intention to remain there for worship. The masjid must be one where the group prayer is offered for the five obligatory prayers.

The I'tikaf is permissible if one is free from a state of major ritual impurity, menstruation, and lochia (post-natal bleeding).

The conditions for a valid vowed I'tikaf (see definition below) are 1) the intention, 2) to be Muslim, 3) sanity, and 4) to be free from menstruation and lochia (post-natal bleeding).

[Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya]



# WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF I'TIKAF?

## 1. Necessary (wajib): the vowed I'tikaf

The vowed I'tikaf is an oath to make i'tikaf for a specified time. It must be at least an entire day and night. One is obliged to fast during it in order for the vowed I'tikaf to count.

## 2. Emphasized sunna: the last ten days and nights of Ramadan

Performing I'tikaf in the last ten days and nights of Ramadan is a strongly emphasized communal sunna. It is blameworthy upon the community as a whole to not perform the I'tikaf. If some people perform the I'tikaf and others do not, then they raise the blameworthiness from the entire community.

The scholars do not stipulate that one must fast during the emphasized sunna I'tikaf because it is performed during Ramadan and the assumption is that the person will be fasting anyway.

## 3. Recommended: any times other than the aforementioned

For the recommended I'tikaf, its minimum duration is a moment, even if it's when one passes through the mosque. Fasting is not a condition for the recommended I'tikaf.

[Shurunbulali, Maraqqi al-Falah; Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya]

## CAN A WOMAN PERFORM I'TIKAF?

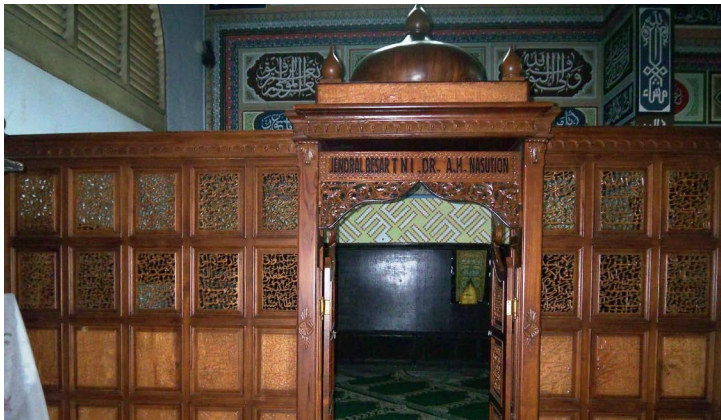
Yes, a woman can perform I'tikaf.

A woman's I'tikaf is best performed in the prayer area of her house. The prayer area is the place where she has designated to pray her obligatory and nafl prayers.

It is disliked for a woman to perform I'tikaf in the masjid.

It is not valid for men to perform I'tikaf in other than the masjid.

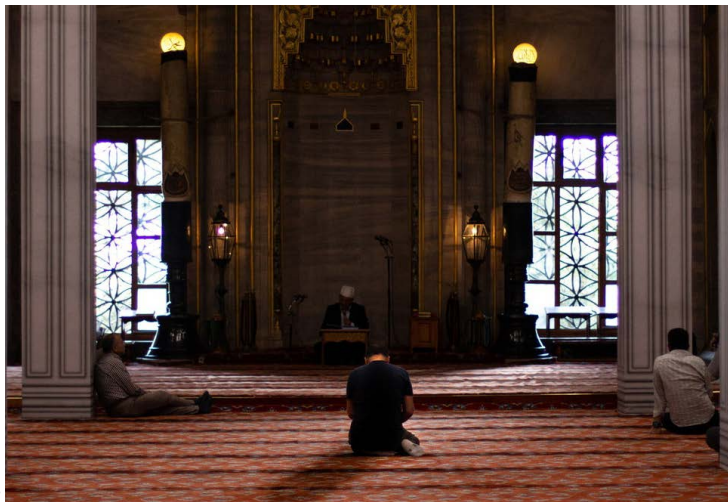
[Ala al-Din Abidin, al-Hadiyya al-Alaiyya]





# CAN ONE LEAVE THE MASJID **DURING I'TIKAF?**

Leaving the masjid without an excuse ends the I'tikaf. This ruling also applies to a woman performing I'tikaf in the prayer area of her house. If one does leave because of an excuse, the excuse must be due to a shariah-compliant need, or to use the restroom if unable to use the masjid facilities, or out of necessity. [Shurunbulali, Imdad al-Fattah]



# WHAT DOES A PERSON DO DURING I'TIKAF?

One is encouraged to busy oneself with worship and anything beneficial, such as praying, reciting the Qur'an, making much dhikr, speaking of the good, and gaining beneficial knowledge.

A person performing I'tikaf can eat, drink, sleep, talk, and do everything that is normally permissible, except for sexual intercourse, kissing, and touching with desire. [Shurunbulali, Nur al-Iydhah]

Allah Most High says, "And do not approach your women while you are performing the spiritual retreat in the masjids." [al-Baqara, v. 187] Engaging in these acts end the I'tikaf whether inside or outside of the masjid. For example, if one left the masjid for a shariah-compliant need and fell into sexual intercourse with one's spouse, then this act ends the I'tikaf. Engaging in these actions end the I'tikaf, regardless of whether one did them during the day or the night.

[Shurunbulali, Maraqi al-Falah; Tahtawi, Hashiyya al-Tahtawi; Shurunbulali Imdad al-Fattah]

During the I'tikaf, it is disliked to believe that remaining silent is a form of worship. It is also disliked to engage in work or trade. [Shurunbulali, Nur al-Iydhah]

May Allah accept our fasts and any act of worship that we perform for His sake.

Ustadha Umm Ihsan is a female student of Islamic knowledge from the US. She studies with leading Hanafi scholars from Syria and elsewhere.



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# THE FIQH OF FASTING RAMADAN ACCORDING TO THE SCHOOL OF **IMAM SHAFI'**

## INTRODUCTION

In the Name of God, the Merciful and Compassionate. No power is there, and no strength, but by God, the High, the Great. All praise belongs to God. We praise Him for all that He has inspired and taught, and thank Him for all His grace and bounties. It is God we ask to whelm with His blessings and peace His most noble Prophet, most eminent Messenger, and greatest Beloved, who is our master and patron Muhammad, and his Family and Companions.

It is the custom in many Muslim countries to hold gatherings before and during Ramadan, in which the fiqh of Ramadan and related issues are reviewed and taught. This particular benefits the everyday people who have little time during the rest of the year for gaining knowledge. It is in this spirit and with this intention that this present work has been dedicated.



## BACKGROUND

Allah, Exalted is He, tells us, “Ramadan is the month in which was sent down the Quran, as a guide to mankind, and clear signs for guidance and judgement. So every one of you who witnesses this month should spend it in fasting.” [2:185]

The Messenger of God (blessings and peace be upon him), informed us: ‘God the Exalted has said: “All good deeds of the son of Adam are multiplied ten to seven hundredfold, except fasting, for it is Mine, and I shall reward a man for it, for he has left his appetite, his food and drink for My sake.” [Bukhari and Muslim]

Fasting, in a general fashion, has been prescribed in every revealed scripture. However, this particular manner of observing the fast during Ramadan is specific to the community of Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him). A weaker opinion states that fasting during Ramadan had been prescribed on every past community except that they strayed from it.

Ramadan was legislated in the month of Sha’baan in the second year after the Hijra. The Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) fasted nine months of Ramadan in total; one of which was 30 days, and the remaining eight as 29 days. It is said that perhaps the wisdom behind this is to put the believer’s heart at rest when Ramadan ends at 29 days, as he may feel in his heart that his Ramadan was not complete, or as a way of letting the ummah know that a 29 day month of Ramadan is equal in reward to a complete month of 30 days.

Imam al Haddad reminds us, “Increase your good works, specifically in Ramadan, for the reward of a supererogatory act performed during it



equals that of an obligatory act performed at any other time. Ramadan is also a time when good works are rendered easy and one has much more energy for them than during any other month. This is because the soul, lazy when it comes to good works, is then imprisoned by hunger and thirst, the devils who hinder it are shackled, the gates of the Fire are shut, the gates of the Garden are open, and the herald calls every night at God's command: 'O you who wish for goodness, hasten! And O you who wish for evil, halt! You should work only for the hereafter in this noble month, and embark on something worldly only when absolutely necessary. Arrange your life before Ramadan in a manner which will render you free for worship when it arrives'.

Note: The rulings below represent the foremost opinion (s) in the Shafi'i school. Other opinions, which are valid but somewhat weaker, have been included for those who genuinely may need to take them. Otherwise, it is best to act upon the most reliable opinions as much as possible. If one feels they have to take a weaker opinion for a specific reason, then it is also good practice, if possible, to later on make up the act of worship, so as to 'cover oneself' as it were. You will also find the names of two Imams repeated often; Imam Ibn Hajr and Imam Ramli (may Allah have mercy on them both). These two imams represent the foremost opinions of the Shafi'i school and one may choose between any one of their opinions as they wish, though this should be done with God-fearingness and discrimination, and not purely out of caprice.



# WHO IS OBLIGATED TO FAST DURING RAMADAN

The conditions of who must fast during Ramadan are four. That they are:

1. Muslim
2. Reached puberty
3. Sane
4. Able to fast

A child is ordered to fast at the age of seven, and at the age of ten is 'hit' if he does not, but on the condition that he is able to fast the full day. 'Hit' here means a very light hit, with a light stick or cloth, and not more than three times, and with the condition that the parent feels it would make a difference.

Note: The people of Tarim, including the scholars, usually introduce praying and fasting gradually in the early years (especially fasting) and without too much force on children, and this was the advice of Imam al Haddad. They also teach, as a general rule, that one should not 'hit' anyone under one's care (child or adult), even if for a valid reason as described in the books of fiqh.

'Able to fast' here means in terms of physical ability or legal ability. For example, an enfeebled person, or child (7-10 years old +) who can not bear the fast is exempt from fasting (physical inability), and a menstruating woman is prohibited from fasting (legal inability).



# THE CONDITIONS WHICH VALIDATE **ONE'S FAST**

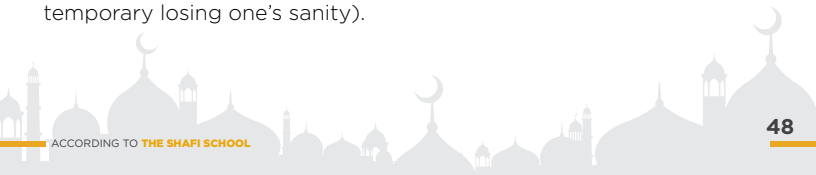
The conditions which make ones fast valid are four:

1. Islam
2. Sanity
3. Purity from menstruation or lochia
4. That the time one is fasting permits fasting

These four conditions must be present throughout the whole fasting day.

Islam: If a person apostates (may Allah protect us) their fasting is nullified (just as their prayer would be nullified). They are still legally responsible to fast, though if they did fast while in a state of apostasy their fast is not valid. Were they to return to the religion, they would have to make up the missed fast days as well as pay the fidia expiation (discussed later).

Sanity: If one loses their sanity during the fasting day, even for a moment – their fast is broken, regardless of whether the reason for losing one's sanity was intentional or unintentional, and even if the substance that caused the insanity was taken at night. However, someone who intentionally took something to lose his sanity must make up the fast, while someone who did not do something intentionally to become insane does not have to make up the fast (this includes someone who has to take medicine which may result in temporary losing one's sanity).





As for someone who is unconscious or suffers from seizures which results in unconsciousness (someone intoxicated takes the same ruling as well): If the unconsciousness was not intentional (they didn't bring it about on purpose, or they had to take a medicine out of necessity which caused this state) and it lasts the whole of the fasting day – then the fast is not valid and he must make that day up, but he has not sinned. If however, the unconsciousness does not last all the hours of fasting, but only some of it – even if he is conscious for only a second of the fasting day – his fast is valid (as long as he made the intention at night before becoming unconscious). As for someone who purposefully made themselves unconscious – it incurs a sin and their fast is nullified, even if their unconsciousness only lasts a second.

Purity from menstruation or lochia: If a woman menstruates, or begins a term of lochia, even for a second – her fast is nullified and she must make up those days.

It is not a condition that a woman actually bleeds after birth for the fast to be nullified, rather the birth itself breaks the fast.

It is prohibited for a menstruating woman or a woman in lochia to refrain from those things that break the fast with the intention she is fasting. However, it is not obligatory on her to do any of those things either (i.e. eat or drink).

That the time one is fasting permits fasting: This means the day one is fasting on is a day that it is legally permitted for one to fast. Examples of days which it is prohibited to fast are:

The two Eids: It is not permitted to fast any type of fast on the two days of Eid, not even make up fasts. If one fasts on these days, it is not



valid. What is meant by Eid here is the first day of each celebration, not the second or third days.

The three days following Eid al-Adha (Tashreeq): It is not permitted to fast during these three days.

The last 15 days of Sha'baan (the month before Ramadan – the prohibition starting on the 16th of Sha'baan as the 15th is considered as being from the first half of the month): It is prohibited to fast after the 15th of Sha'baan to the beginning of Ramadan, unless:

1. One has a previous habit (wird) of fasting (such as every Monday, or every other day etc, even if they only performed the habit once previously. For example, someone intends in the beginning of the year to fast every Monday. They fast on Monday but then do not fast again after that. Months later, on the 17th of Sha'baan for example, he decides to re-start his 'wird' of fasting, and therefore is permitted to fast on a Monday even though it is after the 15th Sha'baan).
2. One made a vow to fast and the fast incidentally fell on these days (as opposed to purposefully choosing those days – in which the fast is invalid and incurs a sin).
3. One has make up fasts to perform.
4. One has expiation (kaffarah) to offer.
5. One began fasting before the 16th (even if they only started on the 15th of Sha'baan) – then it is permitted to continue after the 16th.

The day of uncertainty: The day of uncertainty refers to the day on which it is uncertain whether it is the 30th of Sha'baan or the 1st of Ramadan. Uncertainty occurs when someone who does not fulfil the criteria of a witness mentions having seen the new moon (causing doubt). One can not fast on this day as a day of Ramadan, but may do so as a make up or a vow. Voluntary fasts can only be done if the above reasons are present (see fasting 'the last 15 days of Sha'baan' above).

# THE INTEGRALS OF FASTING

The integrals of fasting are three:

1. The intention
2. Refraining from those things that nullify the fast
3. The person fasting

The intention for an obligatory fast.

The intention is obligatory to say in the heart and recommended to say with the tongue. To say in the heart is to simply 'know' in the heart, or 'run' the intention through in one's mind.

The intention for a fast in Ramadan must:

1. Be made at night
2. Consist of the type of fast intended(Ramadan)

E.g. "I intend to fast tomorrow for Ramadan"

The most complete formula for the intention is:

"I intend to fast tomorrow as a current performance of the obligation of Ramadan of this year for Allah most High".

This optimal formula is valid by consensus and in all schools.

Be made at night: This means the intention for an obligatory fast must be made at night, anytime between Maghrib and Fajr. It is valid to make the intention just after Maghrib has come in, and before one has actually broken the current days fast (for example, at the adhan of Maghrib and before eating your first date).

This must be done each night for each obligatory fasting day, as each day is considered a separate act of worship.

Note: The above condition of intending the fast does not apply to the intention for supererogatory fasts which can be made anytime after Maghrib and before Dhur (on the condition the person has not done already anything that would normally break the fast, such as eating, or having sexual intercourse).

It is not obligatory to say in the intention that it is an 'obligatory/fard' fast (as there are no voluntary fasts in Ramadan).

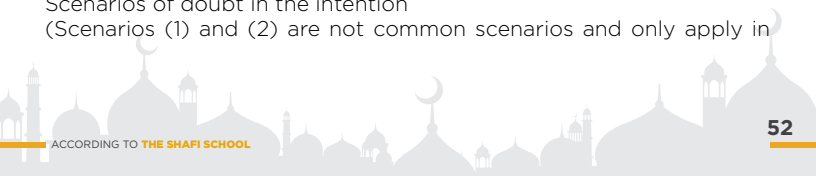
Note: As for making up a missed day of Ramadan, it is not obligatory to say 'of Ramadan' in the intention, as it automatically defaults to the make-up fast (unless one intends something else).

It is recommended on the night of the first day of Ramadan to make the intention for the next day (as a Shafi'i), but also to make the intention to follow the Maliki school and intend to fast the 'whole of Ramadan,' just in case one forgets to make the intention in any of the coming days of Ramadan. Whilst this does not change the necessity of making up the missed day in our school (because of having forgotten the intention), inwardly, the fast is validated through Imam Malik's opinion.

It is recommended for someone who forgets to make the intention at night (which means his fasting is not counted in our school) to nevertheless make the intention before Dhur with the intention of following the Hanafi school, for the same reasons explained above (and as long as he hasn't done anything that breaks the fast).

Scenarios of doubt in the intention

(Scenarios (1) and (2) are not common scenarios and only apply in

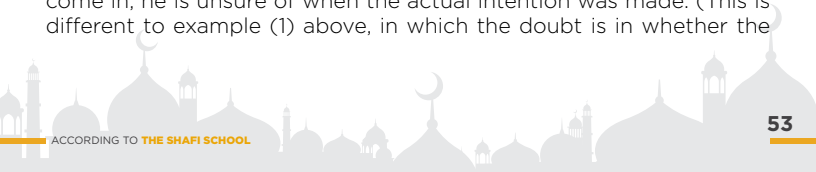


exceptional situations when one can not find out whether Fajr has come in or not, which for most people can be easily worked out by daylight or access to information).

If one is certain of making the intention, but after making it, becomes unsure if Fajr has come in or not: his fast is valid. This is because he is certain of the intention and unsure of whether Fajr has come in or not. The default is that the night still remains. For example: Zaid wakes up and it is still dark. He makes the intention to fast. Just after making the intention he becomes unsure if Fajr has come in or not (so becomes unsure if his intention was made before or after Fajr). Zaid's fast is valid because he had certainty whilst making the intention that it was before Fajr, and there is nothing to say Fajr had come in. However, should he find out later that Fajr had indeed come in before he made the intention, his prayer would be not valid.

If one is certain that he made the intention (without considering whether it is Fajr or not), and is certain that Fajr has definitely come in, but later becomes unsure if the intention was made before or after Fajr (doubts the time of making the intention) – the foremost opinion is that his fasting is not valid. This is because the default is that one did not make the intention first (before Fajr).

Another opinion is that it is valid because the default is that the night still remains. For example: Zaid makes his intention to fast (without considering whether it is Fajr or not). After making the intention he goes back to sleep and doesn't wake up for Fajr. Later on in the day (well after Fajr) he becomes unsure and asks himself, 'Did I make the intention before or after Fajr came in?' In this scenario, despite Zaid being certain he made the intention, and being certain that Fajr had come in, he is unsure of when the actual intention was made. (This is different to example (1) above, in which the doubt is in whether the



time (Fajr) has come in or not, whereas in this example (2), the doubt is in when the actual intention was made).

If at the same time of making the intention one is unsure if Fajr has come in or not – then his fast is not valid. This is because at the time of making the intention he is uncertain about the validity of it. For example, Zaid wakes up late at night. He decides to make his intention to fast but is confused, 'Has Fajr come in or not?' In this situation, Zaid is still making his intention whilst at the same time doesn't know whether it is still night or if day has entered (Compared to examples (1) and (2) where he was certain he had already made the intention but became unsure about the time or when his intention was made. Here (example 3) he is still making his intention and is unsure of the time). A second opinion states that even in this scenario the fast is valid because the default is that the night still remains.

If one makes the intention at exactly the same time as Fajr comes in – his fast is not valid. A weaker opinion states it is valid.

If one doubts if one made the intention at all, or whether if it was made in the evening or morning, but then remembers that he did, or was at night, before Maghrib (according to Imam Ibn Hajr), or even after days (according to Imam Ramli) – then his fast is valid (provided of course he didn't do anything that breaks the fast).

If one fasts the whole day, then after Maghrib becomes uncertain whether he had made the intention or not or whether his intention was at night or not – his fast is valid. This is because the act of worship has finished, and as a general rule doubts do not nullify an act of worship once the act has been completed (as opposed to doubt during an act of worship).



# FAJR TIMES FOR THOSE LIVING IN NORTHERN HEMISPHERES

The answers to this issue are detailed and there is a difference of opinion in regards to when Fajr starts in such countries. These differences of opinion centre on what degree is used to scientifically measure dawn. Others reject scientific use. While some of these opinions may or may not be valid, this does not help the lay-Muslim who just wants to know when he can or can't start his fast.

Among these opinions, the one which stands out as the soundest and perhaps the most practical, and supported by a great majority of qualified scholars, is that 18 degrees is the best way to know the true Fajr time. Shaykh Nuh Keller (may Allah preserve him), who has considerable experience in this field of research, has written a specific article on this, and the Muslim World Fiqh Council and the Committee of Astronomers have agreed that 18 degrees concurs with the Muslim Fajr times. However, during the summer months (in northerly countries, including UK) there is a period in which there is no point at which the sun is 18 degrees from the horizon (making Fajr time difficult to determine), and so a solution for this is needed.

Below is a quote from Shaykh Nuh Keller's article, which presents perhaps the best option available now for Muslims in the UK (Muslims in other countries would have to research their own similar centres for reliable dawn times, following the same practical steps outlined below):



“Commence fasting at the time of the last true 18-degree time for one’s location, and then continue beginning to fast at that time until there is a true 18-degree time again. For example, in Birmingham the last true 18-degree time was on 17 May, when dawn entered at 1:27 a.m. In this case people should start fasting at 1:27 a.m. until 25 July, when true dawn begins again. From 25 July onwards one simply follows the 18-degree time for one’s location.

A second question might arise concerning “whose 18 degrees?” Different timetables list different times for 18 degrees. In the United Kingdom one should follow the times calculated by Her Majesty’s Nautical Almanac Office, who have been observing and calculating times for approximately two hundred years, and until recently were part of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich. These times can be found [here](#).

... Regarding the time of nightfall prayer (Isha), people should determine its beginning when the red leaves the sky, relying on timing their own observation of this on clear evenings, and estimating from these timed observations for other days. Praying Isha after the red leaves the sky is a followable position in both the Hanafi and Shafi’i schools.”

(One may find the link to the full article at the end of this work)





# WHAT DOES THIS ALL MEAN IN PRACTICE FOR THE LAY-MUSLIM?

Go to your most reliable information site for the dawn times calculated upon 18 degrees.

In those summer months when there is no 18 degree point for dawn, then go by the last time there was one.

When there is an 18 degree point, then go by that.

One considers Isha as coming in when 'the red leaves the sky'. Our teachers in Tarim state that this is approximately 80-90 minutes after Maghrib, but to be on the precautionary side one should delay it slightly more than that. And Allah knows best.

Refraining from those things that nullify the fast

Note: There is a difference between forgetting that something is haram and forgetting one is fasting. Someone who knows/remembers he is fasting but does something that breaks the fast because he forgot its prohibition – his fast is nullified. Someone who forgets he is fasting and mistakenly does something that breaks the fast – his fast is still valid.

Note: It is prohibited to intentionally nullify any personally obligatory acts of worship, while disliked (though permissible) to nullify voluntary acts of worship.



Someone who is ignorant of what breaks the fast and does it – his fast is nullified, unless he is new to the religion and/or still actively learning or he lives far away from Muslims and scholars.

If one sees someone else doing something that breaks the fast, such as eating – if it is someone who is known to be upright and pious, then it is sunnah for one to not remind him he is fasting, as it is Allah that has fed and quenched the thirst of his slave out of His bounty. As for someone who is fasting but is known to be impious and takes a relaxed approach to the fast, then it is sunnah to remind him that he is fasting (or should be fasting), providing it does not entail a bad consequence for the person telling him.

The following things break one's fast:

Sexual intercourse

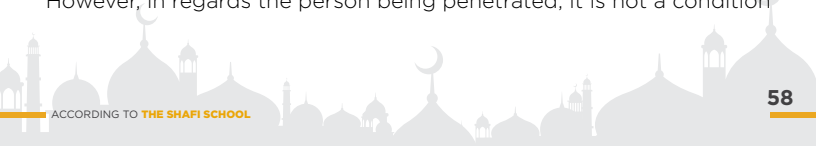
Emission of semen

Vomiting intentionally

The entrance of a substance into a body cavity through an open passage

For sexual intercourse to break one's fast it has to be made intentionally and voluntarily. The fast breaks regardless of whether penetration occurs in the front passage or the back, inside a human or animal, and regardless if one ejaculates or not. If someone forgets he is fasting and has intercourse – his fast is valid. Likewise, if someone is coerced into intercourse then according to many scholars – the fast is valid, while others state it becomes invalid (but obviously with no sin or blame on the person coerced, but necessitating making up that day).

It is a condition (for the fast to be nullified) for the person penetrating that the entire head of the male organ enters (disappears) inside the orifice. If only part of the head enters it does not break his fast. However, in regards the person being penetrated, it is not a condition



that the entire head of the male organ enters the orifice, but rather even if a part of the head enters the passage their fast is nullified. This is because they have entered something into an open orifice (as opposed to the nullifying reason being sexual intercourse).



# EMISSION OF SEMEN

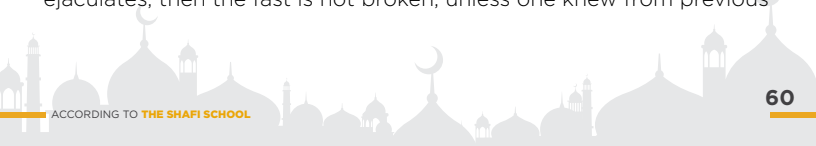
Emission of semen breaks one's fast if emission occurs intentionally, regardless of whether it involves direct skin contact or not, and regardless if by one's hand or by the hand of another, or if one intentionally touches or kisses the skin of a mehram or non-mehram with desire (and he has an emission of semen).

Emission of semen that occurs unintentionally after directly touching or kissing a non-mehram (no barrier between the skin), including one's wife, also breaks the fast, even without desire. As for the emission of semen that occurs unintentionally after touching a mehram directly on the skin, such as out of normal familial closeness, e.g. hugging or touching the skin of a sister or aunt (as opposed to with desire) – then this does not break the fast.

Emission that occurs unintentionally, with a barrier between the skins does not break the fast.

Looking at something or thinking about something which brings about ejaculation (without touching skin) – does not break the fast, even if repeatedly done intentionally (and even if the thing being watched or thought about is haram – which itself is a major sin). However, a very strong opinion in our school, and one which should be taken seriously, holds that if one knows that it will result in emission and does ejaculate – the fast is nullified, he must observe imsaak, and must make up the day.

If someone has a severe itch in their private part and by accident ejaculates, then the fast is not broken, unless one knew from previous



experience that this would happen, or he could have been patient and not itched to such an extent.

If there is orgasm with no emission of semen, such as in retrograde ejaculation, then this does not break the fast, though the act of onanism (masturbation) itself is haram.

Wet dreams, erections (with no emission), or emissions of fluids other than semen do not break one's fast.

Kissing and touching one's spouse is generally best to avoid during fasting hours, as one is meant to leave all desires during the day.

Vomiting intentionally

Vomiting breaks one's fast only if:

1. Done intentionally (such as sticking one's fingers down one's throat)
2. One knows he is fasting

If it is done for no valid reason, then he has sinned. If done for a valid reason, such as when someone feels he must force himself to throw up due to a sickness for example, then his fast is still nullified (and must be made up later) but there is no sin.

Specific to vomiting intentionally during the fast, some scholars say that most common folk are ignorant of this being something that breaks the fast, and they (ordinary people) may be excused.

Vomiting unintentionally does not break one's fast, unless when or after vomiting some part of it returned back into a cavity (see below for definition) and one was able to prevent it from happening (though if one was not, it does not invalidate the fast).

The entrance of a substance into a body cavity through an open passage

The entrance of a substance into a body cavity through an open passage breaks the fast, regardless of whether the substance is small or large, edible or inedible, nourishing or not, a sharp or blunt instrument, medicinal or not, or stabbed by oneself or by another with one's permission (otherwise it does not break the fast). It only breaks the fast when entered knowingly, intentionally, and voluntarily. A weaker opinion holds that for the fast to break, the substance must be something that either nourishes the body or heals the body.

It also breaks the fast if it entered by itself (involuntary) but one was able to stop it entering a cavity but didn't. For example, if someone's tooth spontaneously fell out in one's mouth, and one is able to spit it out, but doesn't, and it gets swallowed.

The inside of a body cavity is defined as that which is not visible when the part is moved. Bodily cavities include: the inside of the ear, the sinus cavities, the mouth down to the stomach, the milk holes in the nipple, the cranial cavity, the vagina, the urethra (male and female), and the anus, though substances must pass through the initial opening of the urethra, and slightly more past the initial opening of the anus, to break the fast.



# THE EYE SOCKET IS NOT **CONSIDERED A CAVITY**

Things that enter the middle of the flesh, without going into the cavity, such as a knife stabbed into the thigh (not a cavity), or into the stomach (the peritoneum cavity) but not passing through the peritoneum lining, do not break the fast.

Non-substances do not break the fast. These include smells, tastes, and smoke, even if one opens his mouth on purpose to take it in. However, the scholars state that smoke from cigarettes or cigars break the fast because it results in substances forming (e.g. tar).

‘Substances’ only refer to things from this world. As for substances from the next world, they do not break one’s fast. Therefore, if one was granted a saintly miracle and sent food from the heavens and ate it during one’s fast – it would not break one’s fast. This is because it is a type of reward, and saintly miracles do not nullify acts of worship.

Substances that enter into the pores of the skin do not break the fast, such as water, oil, or kohl, even if they ultimately enter a cavity, or one finds that his mucus has been tinted with the colour of it.

In regards mucus/phlegm: Swallowing it does not break the fast, regardless whether it comes from the sinus cavities or from the respiratory tract. However, this is on the condition that it remains within the ‘inner parameter’ (hadd al baatin) and it does not pass into the ‘outer perimeter’ (hadd al dhaahir). What is meant by ‘inner

parameter' here is what is below the exit point for the sound of the letters Haa (light) and Hamza. 'Outer perimeter' means here what is from the exit point for the sound of the letters Haa (strong) and Khaa, and out towards the mouth, while the 'outer parameter' of the nose is; from the beginning of the sinus cavity down to the nostrils. If the mucus/phlegm passes into these outer limits, then one must spit or blow it out if able. If one sucks it back into the inner limits – then his fast is broken. If it goes back on its own or due to coughing or sneezing or any other reason one can not control, then it does not break the fast.

Phlegm / mucus that passes through one part of the inner limit to another, without going into the outer limits – does not break one's fast. For example, mucus that slides directly from the nasal cavity down the back of the throat and into the chest.

As for saliva, it does not break the fast regardless of whether it passes the outer limits or not, even if one were to have saliva on the tip of one's tongue, then stick one's tongue out fully, and then stick it back in the mouth, and regardless whether one is able to spit it out or not. However, this is on two conditions:

1. That the saliva does not leave the tongue when outside of the body or separate from the body totally. For example, if the saliva passes the lips and stays on the upper lip, then one licks the lip and swallows the spit – the fast is nullified. Likewise, if one licks his glasses or phone screen for cleaning purposes (as is evidently custom in some countries!), and then while it is still wet with his saliva, re-licks it – his fast is broken if the saliva enters into his mouth and gets swallowed.
2. That the saliva is pure saliva and not mixed with gastric juices from the stomach, or anything else from the teeth or mouth, including blood from one's gum. Otherwise it breaks one's fast.



If the saliva has been mixed, then it becomes obligatory to spit it out if able to at the point that it may go into the cavity. If he is not able to, then it does not break the fast. A second opinion holds that if the saliva is mixed with blood from the gum it does not break the fast, regardless of whether one can spit it out or not, but providing the saliva does not change in quality (colour, smell, taste).

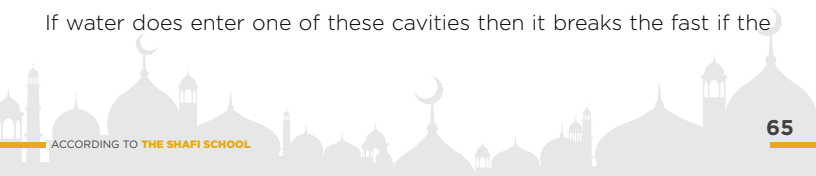
Note: One should be careful that one's saliva is not mixed with toothpaste at the beginning of one's fast. Likewise, that one's saliva does not become mixed with another's saliva, such as if one kissed one's spouse during the fast and saliva mixed, and then swallowed.

Note: One should be careful after relieving oneself and washing with water that no water enters the orifice when cleaning (especially so with the hose), and that one's fingers do not enter any of the passages. Also one should not use suppositories, though if one put it in at night and it remains there in the daytime – it does not nullify the fast, even if it comes out during the day.

If one is in doubt whether water had gone into a passage, or any other body cavity – one's fast is still valid.

Wudu and ghusl: When one washes one's mouth and nose during an obligatory wudu or sunnah wudu (such as wudu before making dhikr), or ears in an obligatory bath (such as from major ritual impurity), or a sunnah ghusl (such as on Friday), or when doing a part of the wudu or ghusl which is obligatory or sunnah (such as the first wash of a limb in wudu (obligatory) and the second and third wash of the limb (sunnah) – one must make sure that no water gets swallowed, enters the sinus cavity, or goes too far into the ear cavity (see below).

If water does enter one of these cavities then it breaks the fast if the



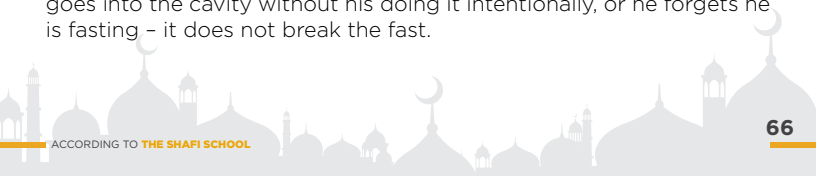
person 'exaggerated' in their mouth/nose/ear rinsing. 'Exaggerating' means here: washing with an abundance of water (which is unnecessary). If there is no 'exaggeration' and water still enters the cavity, then the fast is not broken. If one forgets that he is fasting and exaggerates, or one does not know that rinsing the mouth and nose is a sunnah (and not obligatory) then it also does not break the fast.

In terms of washing the ear in ghusl (such as in major ritual impurity) in which it is obligatory to wash the visible inside part of the ear even if one is fasting, the limit that water can go into (before breaking one's fast) is the same limit that one's index finger can go should one insert it into the ear. Beyond that, the fast is broken. For this reason, it is recommended to make one's purificatory bath before Fajr.

As for non-obligatory or non-sunnah wudu and baths (such as for hygiene or to cool down), or whilst performing an obligatory or sunnah wudu or ghusl but the wash itself is not obligatory or sunnah (such as rinsing the mouth a fourth or fifth time in wudu, or pouring water over oneself a fourth or fifth time in ghusl), and the water enters the cavities, even without exaggeration – the fast is nullified.

If one had filth in one's mouth, nose or ear and when washing it water goes into a cavity, then this does not break the fast even if one was to exaggerate (because when washing away filth a lot of water is recommended).

If one puts water in their mouth for no reason, then accidentally swallows it – his fast is broken. But if he swallows it forgetting that he is fasting then it does not nullify his fast. If he puts it in his mouth for a reason, such as to cool down or moisten his mouth, and the water goes into the cavity without his doing it intentionally, or he forgets he is fasting – it does not break the fast.



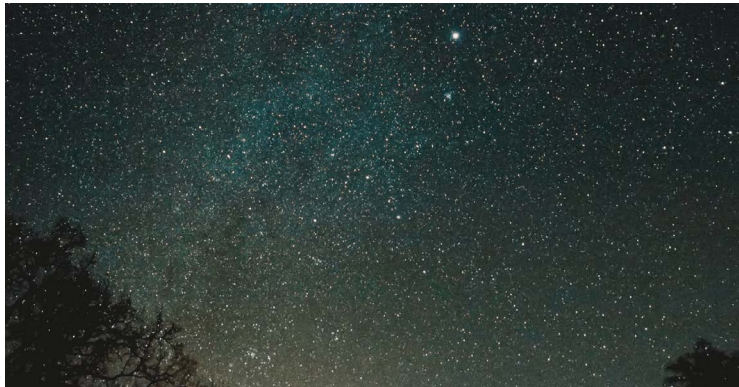
Intramuscular and subcutaneous injections do not nullify one's fast. There is a difference of opinion as to whether intravenous injections break one's fast. While some argue it does break one's fast, many scholars state it does not.

Asthma pumps, inhalers etc do nullify one's fast, but if taken out of necessity then it is permissible to take (no sin), but one must make up the missed day later.

Nasal solutions, like water, breaks one's fast if they pass into the sinus cavity.

Eye solutions do not break one's fast as the eye is not considered an open cavity.

Note: Imam al Ghazali, sharing the medical stance, held the opinion that the ear canal is not an open cavity and therefore any substance entering it does not break one's fast.



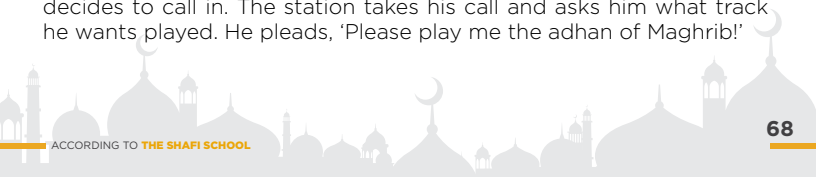
# FOOD AND DRINK

If Fajr comes in and one has food in his mouth and then spits it out – his fast is valid, even if in the process of doing that some of the food accidentally gets swallowed. The same applies to someone who merely holds the food in his mouth (though disliked), as long as no food gets swallowed. Likewise, someone who is making love to his spouse at the time Fajr sets in, if he withdraws immediately – his fast is valid. If he continues, or does not withdraw immediately – his fast is nullified. ‘Immediately’ means here as soon as he realises and before one could finish saying ‘Subhanallah’.

If one is unsure if Fajr has set in, it is not haram to continue eating, though if he finds out later that Fajr had set in, his fast is not valid.

If one is unsure if Maghrib has come in, it is haram to break one’s fast. If he makes ijtiḥad (with it’s conditions) he may break it, though it is better to be certain. If later it turns out that he ate before Maghrib – his fast is invalid. If it turns out he broke his fast after Maghrib – his fast remains valid. If one jumps in and eats without making any ijtiḥad – his fasting is considered invalid unless he can be certain he broke it after Maghrib.

Anecdote: This is a joke some scholars like to tell: A not very observant Muslim, who doesn’t have much patience for fasting, is listening to a music station on the radio during the lunch time call-in hour when people can request the station to play any song they want. So he decides to call in. The station takes his call and asks him what track he wants played. He pleads, ‘Please play me the adhan of Maghrib!’



# THE PERSON FASTING

The person fasting is considered an integral of fasting because without him/her there can be no concept of fasting in one's mind. This is in contrast to the prayer, the person praying not being counted as an integral of the prayer, because prayer is a concept that can be imagined outside of someone actually praying i.e. a person can make sujud, ruku, stand etc outside of prayer as well as in it. There is no concept of 'fasting' outside of imagining a person fasting (!).



# WHO MAY ABSTAIN FROM FASTING OR **BREAK THEIR FAST**

The following people may choose to not fast, or break their fast but must make up missed fasts:

**A sick person:** If one is very sick, and fasting would cause considerable harm, increase their sickness, or delay recovery, then they are entitled not to fast. This is so, even if the person caused the sickness on purpose (though this entails a sin). Likewise, someone who must take their medicine during the fasting hours and can not wait until night may also break their fast by taking the medicine. This may be due to a chronic illness or a severe acute illness, such as an extremely unbearable earache (not minor or bearable illnesses). They must make these missed fast days up another time.

**Note:** A valid fatwa exists (though permissible to act on for oneself, it should be noted it is weak, and not in agreement with the foremost opinions of the school) that if one has an unbearable earache (or similar) that will not go unless one puts a medicine in the ear such as oil and cotton wool, and he is certain that if he were to do this the pain would stop, because a doctor told him so or he knows from previous experience, then it would be permissible to do so and his fast remains valid (Fataawah Baahuwayrath).

**A traveller:** A traveller may choose not to fast if his travel is a) long enough to combine prayers, and b) the intention of travel is permissible, even if he had made the intention to fast before travelling. This dispensation for the traveller is on the condition that he becomes



considered a ‘traveller’ before Fajr sets in.

If he makes the intention to fast and then travels, but then becomes unsure of whether he became a traveller before or after Fajr – his fast is valid and it is not permissible for him to break it.

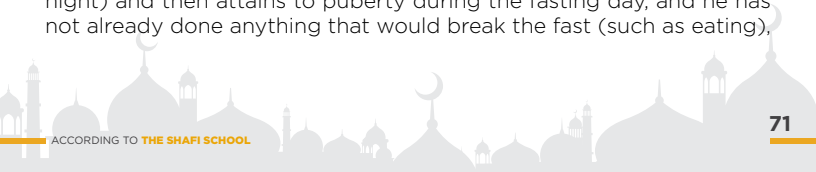
It is recommended to observe the fast even during travel if doing so will not cause him harm, whether this harm is immediate or in the future. If it will cause harm then not fasting (or breaking one’s fast) while travelling is not only recommended, but actually obligatory.

Someone who travels with the sole reason of avoiding the fast is not entitled to the traveller’s dispensation and must fast. The same applies to someone who vows (nadhr) to fast their whole life (As taking the ‘traveller’ dispensation is on the presumption one will make up the missed days after he stops travelling, while a person who takes such a vow will never be able to make them up).

The intention for one who breaks his fast for a valid reason during a Ramadan

If someone wants to break his fast for one of the valid reasons above, it is obligatory for him to make an intention (at the point of breaking it) that he is breaking it as a dispensation. This is to differentiate his valid reason for breaking his fast from an invalid reason (where there is no valid excuse).

If one was fasting – but then the original dispensation for not fasting finishes – and one has not already done something that breaks the fast – then one continues fasting and it is prohibited to break the fast. Examples: If a pre-pubescent child is fasting (he made the intention at night) and then attains to puberty during the fasting day, and he has not already done anything that would break the fast (such as eating),



then upon the onset of puberty (during the fasting hours), he must continue fasting and is no longer entitled to break it. Similarly, when a traveller ceases to be a traveller, or a sick person recovers (and they were fasting, and did not already do something which would break the fast) then upon their arrival or recovery they must continue fasting and are no longer entitled to the dispensation. Their fast is counted as a fasted day of Ramadan. If one of these people were to have intercourse (after the reason for dispensation has ceased) they would have to pay the Kaffarah (expiation).

If, however, they were not fasting already, or they had already broken it (e.g. ate before arriving/recovery), then it is not obligatory to remain fasting. It is recommended though to refrain from those things that break the fast (Imsaak), out of respect for the sanctity of the fasting hours. This last recommendation of imsaak also applies to women who come off their menses during the fasting day, though not to newly-pubescents, or people who have converted to Islam (on a day of Ramadan).





# A GENERAL RULE OF REFRAINING (IMSAAK)

Whoever had a valid reason for not fasting (those mentioned above) and then the reason ceases to exist, then it is recommended to refrain from anything that breaks the fast, but not obligatory (excluding newly-pubescent and new converts).

Whoever does not have a valid reason for not fasting, such as someone who forgot to make the intention at night, or one who broke their fast on purpose, then imsaak is obligatory.

**RULING:** A child who attains to puberty but is unable to fast due to poor health

Shaykh Fadl Ba Raja (among the great Hadrami scholars) was asked about a child who attains to puberty but is unable to fast due to poor health and weakness. His answer was as follows:

If the child (who has attained to puberty) can not fast due to weakness, in that by fasting it will cause him severe hardship [or makes his condition worse], then,

If it is hoped that he will recover from his condition – He is not obligated to fast, but must make up his fasts [upon recovery], and does not have to pay the fidia.

If there is no hope of recovery from his condition – Then he takes the ruling of an elderly person with no hope of recovery – He is not obligated to fast, and does not have to make them up, but he must

pay the fidia for each day missed. And Allah knows best.

**RULING:** Someone who works very long hours or in physically demanding work

Someone who works very long hours, or their work involves much physical work, or other difficult conditions (such as temperature etc) is not allowed to break their fast unless the following six conditions are met:

1. It is not possible to delay the work until Shawwal (the month after Ramadan)
2. It is not possible to do the work at night, or by delaying it would result in the work being destroyed or diminished in some considerable way.
3. That by fasting during such work, it will result in a severe hardship that would not normally be bearable.
4. That he intends his fast at night, and starts the day fasting, and does not break his fast until the [valid] excuse presents itself.
5. That he intends a dispensation when breaking it
6. That he not intend the work solely so he does not have to fast.

If these six conditions are met, then it is permissible for him to break his fast, regardless of whether the work is for himself or for someone else, and even if that someone else could have got another person to do the job. This applies to any job, such as doctors and nurses, or people who work on fields and farms. All of these conditions must be met, otherwise he is not entitled to break the fast.



# BREAKING ONE'S FAST DUE TO FEAR OF **ANOTHER'S WELFARE**

Someone who does not fast, or breaks their fast, for the sole reason that they fear over someone else's welfare – it is permitted not to fast, but must make up the missed day and pay the expiation (Fidia-discussed later). If fasting entails a serious and real problem to the third party then not fasting or breaking one's fast becomes obligatory. Examples include:

1. A pregnant woman who does not fast or breaks her fast solely out of concern for the welfare of her child, such as she fears a premature birth if she were to fast.
2. A nursing mother who does not fast or breaks her fast solely out of concern for the welfare of her nursing child, such as she fears her milk will decrease if she fasts.

Note: A very strong opinion in our school states that even if a pregnant or nursing woman doesn't fast solely out of the concern for the child – she does not need to pay the Fidia (expiation).

Someone who breaks their fast in order to save a life or someone's limb (human or animal, excluding swine and dogs in our school), and there is no other way of doing so other than to break one's fast, such as diving into the sea.

As for someone who doesn't fast (or breaks their fast) out of concern for their own welfare (only), or out of fear of another's welfare but this is joined with the fear of one's own welfare as well – then the missed

fast has to be made up but there is no expiation. An example of the latter is a pregnant woman who fears for the sake of her child but also her own health.

The upshot of this scenario is:

1. All must make up their missed days of fast, regardless of reason. If one abstains from fasting solely out of concern for another – they must also pay the expiation.
2. If they fear for their own welfare and another's welfare – there is no expiation.



# MAKING UP MISSED FASTS AFTER RAMADAN

Whoever misses a day of Ramadan must make up the missed day. This is the case whether someone missed a day for a valid reason or not, and regardless of whether the day fasted was a long or short day (i.e. a short winter day can make up for a long summer day missed previously and vice versa). This also applies to fasts missed due to menstruation and lochia.

The following are exempt from this rule so do not have to make up missed days of Ramadan:

1. A pre-pubescent child who attains to puberty
2. An insane person who becomes sane (on the condition his insanity was not caused intentionally)
3. And a non-Muslim who becomes Muslim

However, it is sunnah for a pubescent child to make up missed days of fasting from when he was a pre-pubescent child at the age of full age of discrimination (around 7-8 years old and upwards, depending on the individual child), and for a new Muslim to make up the day he converted to Islam (if it falls on a day of Ramadan), though this is not obligatory on either.

When to make up the missed days of Ramadan

Someone who missed a day of Ramadan because of a valid excuse (including someone who forgot to make the nightly intention) – must make the day up after the excuse for not fasting ceases to exist. For

example, a sick person who misses the whole of Ramadan due to his illness makes up all the fasts once he recovers, even if that is a long time after Ramadan.

It is recommended for such a person to make up the fasts as early as possible, and consecutively, but it is not obligatory to make them up straight away. However, if one delays making up the prayers until only the same amount of days are left before the next Ramadan arrives, then it becomes obligatory to make them up. For example, if someone had missed 5 days of Ramadan, it is permissible (though disliked) to leave making them up until only 5 days remain before the next Ramadan, at which point it becomes obligatory.

As for someone who missed a fasting day without a valid reason – they must make up their fasts immediately, without delay.



# RECOMMENDED ETIQUETTES OF RAMADAN

The following are sunnah, or the recommended etiquettes during Ramadan:

To break the fast (by eating or drinking) as soon as possible once Maghrib has definitely set in, and one gets rewarded for hastening to it (separate to the reward of actually breaking it).

One may ask, does this sunnah/reward apply to all manners of breaking one's fast (other than eating and drinking), such as intercourse or poking a stick in one's ear? Some scholars state it does, while others state that while it breaks the fast, it is not rewarded for the sunnah of hastening to break it. The reason being that the intention in taking food and drink is to nourish and strengthen oneself, and this can not be said for the other ways to break one's fast.

It is recommended (to achieve the optimal sunnah) to break one's fast on three fresh dates, and if not unavailable, then three dry dates, and if not three, then one. If one has no dates, then water. However, in terms of getting the basic reward of breaking the fast, this is attained by eating or drinking anything (permissible).

Note: All scholars agree on fresh dates being the first in order but some scholars give a different order after the fresh dates (though the above order is by far the most accepted and practiced opinion), among them: to have anything sweet before water (after fresh dates), or to drink Zamzam water before the dry dates (and after fresh dates),

or to drink a handful of fresh river water before dry dates, as fresh river water is most remote from any doubt.

To say the recommended supplications when breaking the fast. The duas for breaking the fast are many, but the most common one's are:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي لَكَ صُمْتُ وَبِكَ آمَنْتُ وَعَلَى رِزْقِكَ أَفْطَرْتُ

Allah, I have fasted for You, and I have believed in you, and from the sustenance given by You, I break the fast.

One may add:

ذَهَبَ الظَّمَأُ وَابْتَلَّتِ الْعُرُوقُ وَثَبَتَ الْأَجْرُ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ

The thirst has gone and the veins are moist, and reward is assured, if Allah wills.

One may further add:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِرَحْمَتِكَ الَّتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَنْ تَغْفِرَ لِي

Allah, I ask You by Your mercy which envelops all things, that You forgive me.

It is recommended to intend to fast (the next day) when breaking one's current fast, to ensure one does not forget later. It is also recommended to remake the intention after having the pre-dawn meal (suhoor).





It is a sunnah to provide others with means to break the fast, even if it is with one date or some water, though a meal is optimal. It is recommended to invoke for the person who has provided one with food to break the fast, by saying:

أَفْطَرَ عِنْدَكُمْ الصَّائِمُونَ ، وَأَكَلَ طَعَامَكُمْ الْآبَرَارُ ، وَصَلَّتْ عَلَيْكُمْ الْمَلَائِكَةُ

With you, those who are fasting have broken their fast, you have fed those who are righteous, and the angels recite their prayers upon you.

It is sunnah to eat with those whom you provide food, though if one knows they would be embarrassed to eat in front of the host, the host may leave them to eat.

The pre-dawn meal (suhoor): It is sunnah to take the pre-dawn meal, and there is reward and blessings in it. The time for the pre-dawn meal enters in the middle of the night (not necessarily midnight, the night must be calculated to find the middle).

The wisdom behind the pre-dawn meal is that it inculcates piety, and is a point of divergence from the People of the Book.

Imam Ibn Hajr states that one should partake in it even if one is already full-up. The order of food is the same as when breaking the fast; fresh dates, then dry dates, then water. If one is going to eat more than this, one should start with these first.

The pre-dawn meal should be left as late as possible (opposite to breaking the fast), unless one becomes uncertain if Fajr has come in or not.

One should ensure that they have brushed their teeth / rinsed their



mouth before Fajr enters.

If one is obligated to take a bath (such as after intercourse, or after menstruation) then they should take it before Fajr, not only to make sure no water reaches a cavity, but also to start the fasting day in a state of purity.

It is encouraged to be generous and increase in excellence in one's dealings with family and neighbours, even if they are not in need, and to increase in voluntary charity to those in need.

One should increase their recitation of the Quran, as well as reciting it with one another. One should also increase one's remembrance (dhikr), and asking for forgiveness (istighfaar), one of the best dhikr in Ramadan being:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ كَرِيمٌ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي

O Allah! You are The One Who forgives greatly, and loves to forgive, so forgive me

It is recommended to make the intention of Itikaaf (Spiritual retreat) as much as possible. One can do this by intending each time they go to the mosque, and before entering, 'I intend Itikaaf for the duration I remain in this mosque'.

The last ten days of Ramadan are an emphasised sunnah for doing itikaaf, for the reason that Lailat al Qadris widely believed as being in the last ten days.

Tarawih prayers: The Tarawih prayers consist of twenty rakats and may be prayed in congregation or individually.

Tahajjud and/or Tarawih during Ramadan in the summer months



During the long days of summer fasts, with very little time at night to offer both Tahajjud and Tarawih, one may be unsure which to pray. First, we should know that:

Qiyam al-layl is the name given to any prayer offered after one has prayed Isha.

Tahajjud is the name for any prayer after one has prayed Isha and slept, even if they only slept for a moment.

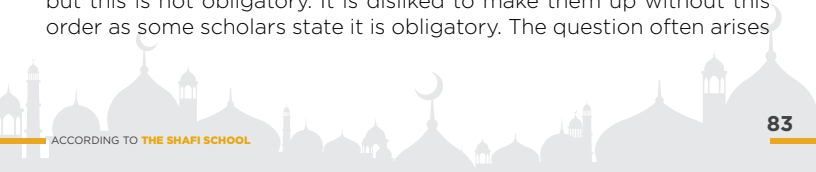
All Tahajjud is therefore also Qiyam al layl, but not all Qiyam al layl is Tahajjud.

In regards to Tarawih then, while it is always prayed after Isha, there is a difference to what it falls under, depending on if it is prayed before or after sleeping. In the Shafi'i school, the sunnah is to pray Isha, then sleep, and then wake up and pray Tarawih. In this way, one can pray Tarawih with the simultaneous intention of it being Tahajjud (and it is automatically termed as Qiyam al layl as well). This way one does not feel they have to pray Tarawih separately and then try to fit in Tahajjud before the pre-dawn meal, or after. One gets rewarded for both Tarawih and Tahajjud.

However, if one prays their Tarawih straight after Isha, without sleeping first (as most people do), whether in congregation or individually, then this is also acceptable, although one can not consider the Tarawih as Tahajjud (but it does generally come under Qiyam al layl). One could however, pray just two rakats after sleeping to fulfil Tahajjud, or if Witr is prayed after sleeping, then it counts as Witr and Tahajjud.

Make up prayers during Ramadan

Making up prayers should be done in order (i.e. as they were missed), but this is not obligatory. It is disliked to make them up without this order as some scholars state it is obligatory. The question often arises



as to whether one can or should make up prayers while praying Tarawih in congregation. The answer is, according to the foremost opinion, that one can make them up intending each one as a Fajr make-up (if one has many Fajr make-ups for example). Otherwise one should make their prayers up at home instead, preferably in the order missed.



# LAILAT AL-QADR

The Night of Power is named as such because of its tremendous station and weightiness, as well as Allah Most High decrees in it whatever He wishes.

It is stated that Lailat al Qadr occurs during the last ten days of Ramadan. Some say the odd nights, some the last three odd nights, and many hold (and the most famous) is the 27th as being the Night of Power. Others hold that it is on the middle night of the month, all of Ramadan, and the whole year. Imam Shafi'i inclined towards it being on the 21st or the 23rd of Ramadan. Others amongst the Shafi'ite scholars have said that each year it changes from one night amongst the last ten nights, and this opinion unites the opinion of Imam Shafi'i and others. Imam Bajuri indicates that it falls on an odd numbered night of Jum'ah in the last half of Ramadan. The opinions as to when Lailat al Qadr occurs reach to about 40 opinions!

The wisdom behind the ambiguous date of Lailat al Qadr is to encourage the Muslims to 'bring alive' and adorn their nights with worship during the last ten nights of Ramadan, as it is a specific attribute of our ummah, and will remain as such until the Final Day (as opposed to the sects who claim that the Night of Power will or has been lifted and is no more).

The works done in Lailat al Qadr are better than 1000 months in which there is no Lailat al Qadr.

The minimal of what is meant by 'bringing alive' one's night is to pray Isha in congregation, and this fulfils the meaning and there is a

tremendous reward just in this. One should also 'bring alive' the day of Lailat al Qadr with worship (the day following the night of Lailat al Qadr) just as one did on the night of it.

While it is recommended to stay up the whole night in worship during the last ten days of Ramadan, it is disliked, and some actually consider it a reprehensible innovation, to stay up the whole of the night of every night of Ramadan, unless it is the usual habit of one to stay up in worship at nights (in which case there is no dislike in it). And Allah knows best.



# THE SIGNS OF LAILAT AL QADR

The Signs of Lailat al Qadr are that:

1. It will be a night in which the temperature is moderate (neither hot or cold)
2. The sun will rise white in colour on the day of Lailat al Qadr (the day following the night of Lailat al Qadr), and it will not have many rays (because of the light of the angels ascending and descending, the light of the angels overtaking the light of the sun)
3. That no baby will be conceived to a disbeliever on this night
4. The wonders of the angels are more likely to be disclosed to humans on this night though how much is disclosed differs between individuals.

Whoever sees a wonder of the Night of Power should say to themselves the invocation mentioned previously:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفْوٌ كَرِيمٌ تَحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ قَاعَفْ عَنِّي

And they should say this to themselves because seeing a wonder of the Night of Power is a saintly miracle (karama), and it is not becoming to disclose saintly miracles by consensus of all true spiritual paths unless there is a specific reasons justified by the shariah, such as to make firm the heart of a student, or to curtail a disbeliever.



# THINGS ONE SHOULD LEAVE **DURING RAMADAN**

One should leave lying, backbiting, and tale-bearing (in that it is more emphasised during Ramadan, otherwise it is sinful and obligatory to leave all the time). If one lies or backbites during a fasting day – he incurs a sin, he loses all reward for the fast (even if he repents afterwards), but his fast is valid. Other's held that it actually breaks the fast, which concurs with the Hanbali school.

One should try to leave all forms of permissible desire during the fasting hours (impermissible desires go without saying) such as perfume, expensive or fancy clothes, smelling or looking at flowers, entertainment. This is because the wisdom in fasting is to break one's desire.

One should leave insulting and cursing. If one is insulted one should a) remember in one's heart that one is fasting as way of both rebuking and suppressing his own ego, and 2) say as such with his tongue ('I am fasting'), as a way of suppressing the one insulting him and answering back with that which is better, so long as he does not sense a sense of ostentation in him doing so.

One should leave off having cupping (blood/wet cupping) done or doing it on someone else, as some scholars state it breaks the fast.

Chewing gum (lubaan) is disliked as it makes one thirsty as well as if mixed with saliva and swallowed, nullifies the fast.



It is disliked to taste food for no reason. However if there is a valid reason, and there is no other non-fasting person who can do it, then it is not dislike – such as softening bread for a child to eat, or doing tahneek. However, one should be careful and spit out any saliva that may become mixed.

Touching or kissing one's spouse on the mouth, or anywhere else, is best not to do (Khilaaf al Oula), even if one feels certain there is no chance of ejaculation. If one feels desire when kissing or touching – then it is disliked (makrouh). As for one who fears they might ejaculate from touching or kissing, even if an old person – then it is haram. This all applies to obligatory fasts, and not voluntary, where there is no prohibition, though disliked.

It is disliked to use the toothstick (siwak) after Dhur and up until sunset (i.e. should not be used for the Dhur prayer or Asr prayer). Imam al Nawawi held that it is disliked only after the Asr prayer (therefore permissible in all prayers).

It is prohibited to fast continuously, such as two days or more in a row, without breaking them in between (byeating or drinking something that nourishes one), regardless if the fast is an obligatory fast or voluntary, or one is able and strong enough to do so or not, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) clearly forbade it. As for a non-fasting person not eating for days, there is no prohibition in it as long as there is no harm involved to the individual.



# EXPIATIONS

## FIDIA

Fidia consists of one mudd of the main staple food (a dry measure consisting of a medium handful, amounting to approximately 0.51 litres) of the place the person is in at the point making up the fast becomes possible for him. One mudd must be paid for each day missed.

An example: Aisha is pregnant, and currently lives in Jordan. Ramadan falls on the second month of Aisha's pregnancy. She decides not to fast the whole month solely out of concern for the child. In the following months after Ramadan, Aisha has not been able to make up the missed days of fast due to her own poor health, during which she travels to the UK for the birth, which is then followed by 40 days of lochia. After the lochia term, she feels rested and healthy. She remains in the UK for a further two weeks before travelling back to Jordan. In this example, making up the fasts only became possible in the UK, and therefore she must pay one mudd of the staple grain of the people in the UK for each day of Ramadan missed (and not Jordan, even though that is where the original fasts were missed). If, however, Aisha was still poorly after her lochia term and unable to make up the fast, and then travelled back to Jordan, after which she started to recover and finally regained health (feeling that she can now make up the fasts should she wish) – she must pay one mudd of the staple grain of the people in the Jordan for each day of Ramadan missed.

A second opinion states that one can pay the fidia anywhere abroad (including online payments with the intention it is fidia for one's missed fasts).

The mudd(s) must be distributed to the poor and the needy. It is permissible to give many mudds to one person, but not one mudd between two or more people. Nor can one give one and a bit to one person, and the same to others.

The following people must pay the Fidia for the days they missed, as well as making up the fast:

1. Someone who did not fast or broke his fast without a valid legal excuse
2. A pregnant woman who does not fast or breaks her fast solely out of the concern for the welfare of her child (according to the foremost opinion)
3. A nursing mother who does not fast or breaks her fast solely out of the concern for the welfare of her nursing child (according to the foremost opinion)
4. Someone who breaks their fast in order to save a life or someone's limb (human or animal), and there is no other way of doing other than to break one's fast (according to the foremost opinion)
5. Someone who did not fast or broke his fast for a valid reason but did not make them up before the next Ramadan while he was able to (but not if he was unable).
6. The following people must pay the Fidia for the days they missed, but do not have to make up the fast:
7. Someone who is not able to fast due to sickness or enfeeblement, and there is no hope of recovery
8. The obligation of paying the mudd repeats each year. This means that for each year delayed, each day mounts up by one mudd. There is a strong opinion in the school that it does not repeat, so one would only pay one mudd for each day, even if he delayed making them up for years.

## KAFFARAH

Kaffarah is due on anyone who nullified a day of Ramadan through sexual intercourse (whether vaginal or anal, human or animal, with one's spouse or illicit). However, the kaffarah is not due on the woman made love to (because her fast first broke due to a substance entering an orifice and not because of sexual intercourse). Nor is it on the man who has been entered (though his fast breaks). Someone who has sexual intercourse, forgetting he is fasting (or coerced) does not have to pay expiation as his fast is still valid.

Kaffarah is due for each day nullified, and not for each act of intercourse. So if one was to break their fast through intercourse, and then later has intercourse again on the same day – only one kaffarah is due for that day.

Kaffarah is not due on someone who breaks his fast by:

1. Sexual intercourse on fasting days outside of Ramadan even if it is a make up of Ramadan.
2. Emission of semen (even if he has intercourse afterwards)
3. A traveller or a sick person who has sexual intercourse (even if illicit)
4. Someone who thought it was night time, so had intercourse, then later found it was daytime
5. Someone who has intercourse and does another thing that breaks the fast at exactly the same moment, such as eating
6. The woman made love to or the man entered into (though they would have to pay the fidia expiation if done intentionally and voluntarily).
7. The kaffarah due, in order (of availability or ability, not choice) are:
8. Freeing a believing slave, free from defects (not applicable in modern times)

9. Fasting for two consecutive months: if one takes a break during any day within these two months – one must start the two months again. This is regardless of whether the break is taken for a valid reason or not, though someone in a state of long term unconsciousness (such as a coma) does not have to start from the beginning.
10. Feeding 60 people a mudd of the main staple food: Each person must get one mudd. It is not permissible to give one person 60 mudd. One can give 60 mudd all in one go to 60 people. 'Feeding' here means giving the recipients the staple as possession they own (not cooked). It can not be given to one's own family, even if they are deserving recipients.

In regards to this order, there is some leeway in the school, as the scholars state that fasting two months continuously with the possibility of having to restart if one has to take a break is extremely hard on most people, and therefore the reliable opinion is that one can forego the fasting and feed 60 people instead.



# FASTING THE SIX DAYS OF SHAWWAL

The six days of Shawwal (The month after Ramadan) are the days that immediately follow the first day of Eid al Fitr (2nd – 7th Shawwal). It is recommended to fast the first six days of Shawwal, as the Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) gave the glad tidings that “Whoever fasts Ramadhan, then follows it with six days from Shawwal, it is like they fasted the entire year.” [Muslim]

The reward of fasting the six days of Shawwal brings about the above reward. The Sunnah of fasting them consecutively is a separate reward. One may separate the six days anytime during Shawwal, but it is better to fast them consecutively (if one is able to) as hastening to worship is always recommended and by not doing so, one forgoes the (separate) reward of fasting them consecutively.

The reward of these six days is as if one had fasted obligatory fasts. Therefore, were one to fast the six days of Shawwal with Ramadan every year; it would be as if they observed obligatory fasts their whole life!

Both these rewards apply even if one had not fasted all the days of Ramadan, though Imam Ibn Hajr states that this does not extend to those who broke their fast without a valid excuse (though if he made up the fasts, and was still able to fast six days within the month of Shawwal (e.g. he had 15 days to make up and does so straight after Eid, then fasts 5 days of Shawwal consecutively) – he gets the ‘basic’



reward of the sunnah for having fasted six days in the month Shawwal, but he loses the added reward of it being like an obligatory fast and equal to a whole year, or for fasting consecutively).

Can one combine the intention for make up fasts and the six days of Shawwal?

It is valid to combine one's intention, such as a make-up fast with the six days of Shawwal. Imam Ramli even states that if one did not make an intention for the voluntary act of worship (e.g. the six days) and it coincided with the obligatory worship (e.g. make-up), the person receives both rewards. However, both Imam Ibn Hajr and Imam Ramli agree that one only receives the 'basic' reward of the voluntary worship, and not the complete reward, such as it being as if one fasted an obligatory fast and equal to a whole year. For this reason, (as well as that some scholars have held it to be invalid to combine intentions) it is preferable to not combine the two fasts, in order to receive the full reward.

All praise and thanks is due to Allah, Lord of Worlds



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